

By: Senator(s) Nunnelee, Albritton, Burton,
Butler, Frazier, Jackson (11th), Jackson
(32nd), Thomas, Tollison

To: Public Health and
Welfare; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2931

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A DISABILITY RESOURCE COMMISSION TO MAKE
2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE ON ISSUES RELATING TO PEOPLE
3 WITH DISABILITIES; TO PRESCRIBE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION
4 AND PRESCRIBE ITS POWERS AND DUTIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

6 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is hereby established the Mississippi
7 Disability Resource Commission. The function of the commission is
8 to:

9 (a) Assimilate and provide current information to
10 persons who need health, special education or disability
11 information or services;

12 (b) Refer those persons to the appropriate agencies to
13 receive needed information or services;

14 (c) Facilitate coordination of services provided by
15 agencies for the maximum benefit of persons who need health,
16 special education or disability services;

17 (d) Otherwise assist persons who need health, special
18 education or disability services in obtaining information and
19 services; and

20 (e) To be a comprehensive clearinghouse of information
21 for people with disabilities related to potential service
22 programs.

23 (2) The powers and duties of the Mississippi Disability
24 Resource Commission shall include, but are not limited to, or
25 provided in any priority order, the following:

26 (a) To collect and analyze health, special education
27 and disability-related data for use by state agencies,
28 universities and colleges, organizations and private citizens;

29 (b) To advise the Governor, the Legislature, the
30 Mississippi congressional delegation, state agencies, the business
31 community, other public and private groups and the general public
32 on health, special education and disability issues and concerns,
33 and to make recommendations to address those identified matters,
34 with emphasis on increasing opportunities for independence and
35 employment;

36 (c) To coordinate and conduct public relations
37 activities to promote the skills and capabilities of persons
38 needing health, special education or disability services; and

39 (d) To submit an annual report to the Governor and to
40 the Legislature with recommendations to address the needs of
41 persons in Mississippi needing health, special education or
42 disability services, and other pertinent data regarding health,
43 special education or disability issues.

44 (3) The membership of the commission shall consist of twelve
45 (12) members as follows:

46 (a) The Executive Director of the Department of
47 Rehabilitation Services, or his or her designee;

48 (b) The Executive Director of the Department of Mental
49 Health, or his or her designee;

50 (c) The Executive Officer of the State Department of
51 Health, or his or her designee;

52 (d) The State Superintendent of Public Education, or
53 his or her designee;

54 (e) The Executive Director of the Division of Medicaid,
55 or his or her designee;

56 (f) The Executive Director of the Department of Human
57 Services, or his or her designee; and

58 (g) Two (2) appointments each by the Governor,
59 Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House of Representatives.

60 The appointments referenced in paragraph (g) shall be a
61 person with a disability, a representative of a disability

62 advocacy group, or the parent of a person with a disability. Of
63 these appointments, there shall be no more than one (1)
64 appointment from the same consumer organization or advocacy group
65 during the same term of appointment.

66 (4) Members appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor
67 and the Speaker of the House shall serve for four (4) years to run
68 with authority of their terms of office. An appointment to fill a
69 vacancy, other than by expiration of a term of office, shall be
70 made for the balance of the unexpired term.

71 (5) Membership of the commission shall elect the chairperson
72 and vice chairperson of the commission. The chairperson and vice
73 chairperson shall be a representative from an appointment of one
74 of the disability groups referenced in subsection (3)(g) and from
75 a state agency. The chairperson and vice chairperson shall serve
76 for a term of one (1) year beginning on July 1 of each year. The
77 following year the vice chairperson shall serve as chairperson and
78 a new vice chairperson shall be elected according to the terms set
79 forth in subsection (4).

80 (6) The commission shall meet at least quarterly and hold
81 other meetings as are necessary for the purpose of conducting
82 required business, not exceeding six (6) meetings in any one (1)
83 fiscal year. If funds are available for that purpose, the
84 appointed members of the advisory committee may be paid per diem
85 and travel expenses in accordance with the provisions of Sections
86 25-3-69 and 25-3-41.

87 (7) The Mississippi Disability Resource Commission may
88 receive and expend any monies appropriated by the Legislature,
89 apply for and utilize grants, and receive gifts or any other
90 appropriate source of funds to carry out the duties of office.

91 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
92 and after its passage.